

welcomed with concerned faces by the family ten minutes later.

Old Mr. Ward saw at once that there was something serious the matter with John's right arm. They made him comfortable, Muriel hovering about him like a veritable ministering angel. They sent for a doctor.

"You will not be able to use that arm for a full three weeks," was the dictum of the physician.

"But my work in the city!"

"Friend John," said Mr. Ward quietly, "you are going to be patient and happy among us until you are all well. We are going to give you the vacation and rest you have needed for ten years."

So John Lane settled down into the fair groove in which circumstances had placed him. Muriel, his solicitous nurse, flitted about him with her sweet, womanly ways, and deeper and deeper grew his love for her.

Meanwhile the festal basket which had been left by John on the doorstep of a house he could not now locate had performed a glorious mission.

In that humble cottage lived a Mrs. Bernard and her three little children. For over a year her husband had been lost, missing—dead, she now feared. He had gone to a remote part of Australia to look up the estate of a dead brother. The months passed by, and no word was received from him.

With the family on the verge of positive destitution and ill, discouraged, nearly heartbroken, when John Lane knocked at the door of the house that stormy night the mother lay very near to the point of dissolution and the children huddled over a smoldering fire in the kitchen stove. They had not heard the summons at the front door, but the next morning when the eldest boy went out to seek for some dry branches to burn he discovered the basket.

What magic of joy it proved to them! Mrs. Bernard never doubted that some kind person had thought of them, and secretly provided for their necessities. What a royal feast they

had! The nourishing food, the good will of kind hearts implied roused the woman to new hope and courage and saved her life.

And then, two nights later, there burst in upon them the husband and father, returned. He had been lost, delayed amid great danger, but had come back to the happy home fold a rich man.

The evening after that John and Muriel were seated conversing in the cozy parlor of the Ward home.

"I am asking so much of you, dear," John was saying lovingly. "After waiting so long, we must be patient another year or two."

"What is that to a woman who truly loves?" murmured Muriel.

There was a ring at the door bell. Muriel answered the summons. A stranger confronted her.

"Is there a Mr. Lane here?" she was asked, and the caller was led into the parlor, where he grasped John's hand warmly.

"You are the gentleman who left a basket at my home a few nights since?" he said.

"Unintentionally," replied John, "but if it made anybody happy—"

"It saved my wife's life, and I have come to thank you," said Mr. Bernard earnestly. "I found your name on one of the packages. It gave your city address, and from there I traced you here. I must know you better."

He got to know sterling, honest John Lane so well that he started him in business for himself.

And the fullness of joy and happiness complete came at last to the two loyal lovers.

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An enterprising florist, in order to increase his trade, displayed this sign in his window: "We give a packet of flower seeds with every plant." His competitor across the street promptly sought to meet the competition by placing in his window the following announcement: "We give the earth with every plant."